The Seed Sower.

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Two Songs by Christina Rosetti.

I.

A LIFE'S PARALLELS.

Never on this side of the grave again,
On this side of the river,
On this side of the garner of the grain,
Never,—

Ever while time flows on and on and on,
That narrow noiseless river;
Ever while corn bows heavy-headed, wan,
Ever,—

Never despairing, often fainting, rueing,
But looking back, ah never!
Faint yet pursuing, faint yet still pursuing,
Ever!

II.

SUMMER IS ENDED.

To think that this meaningless thing was ever a rose,
Scentless, colourless, *this!*
Will it ever be thus (who knows?)
Thus with our bliss
If we wait till the close?

Though we care not to wait for the end, there comes the end,
Sooner, later, at last,
Which nothing can mar, nothing mend;
An end locked fast,
Bent we cannot rebend.

Spirits in Prison.

SERMON

BY THE REV. DR. WARSCHAUER, M.A.

"Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."—1 PETER iii., 18-19.

There are perhaps few statements in the New Testament less satisfactorily authenticated than the one contained in the latter part of our text,—that which ascribes to Jesus the function of preaching, not merely to his countrymen during his lifetime, but after suffering death on the cross, of bringing the message and consolation of the Gospel to those who are called spirits in prison—unhappy souls doomed for their transgressions to inhabit some shadowy limbo, some grey and comfortless underworld, shut out from the bliss of heaven and the presence of God. No assertion made concerning Jesus Christ, I said, is perhaps more questionable than this one; not only is it the only allusion to an occurrence, which from the nature of the case eludes ordinary proof, but that allusion does not even occur in one of the four Gospels, the

canonical records of Christ's life. Moreover, the writer of the First Epistle of St. Peter was certainly not S. Peter, but an author writing at a considerably later date, whose identity we cannot trace, and of whose sources for the extraordinary statement he makes we have no knowledge whatever. Altogether, unless we approach the scriptures with an *a priori* belief in their absolute inerrancy, we shall hardly for a moment seriously consider the question of the historical truth of this alleged occurrence; and although the so-called Apostles' Creed, basing itself upon this passage, asserts that Christ on being crucified descended into hell, it is hardly a clause upon which the millions who every week repeat it reflect very seriously, or to which they attribute any particular meaning; and in the version of the creed to be found in the new nonconformist catechism, it disappears altogether—for what reason I know not, since it has at least undeniable warranty in scripture.

But without for a moment suggesting that the statement made by this pseudonymous author has a shadow of historical foundation, without even inquiring into the possibility or probability of the event which he mentions taking place, I confess that I should be most unwilling to strike out from the Bible this passing allusion to a legend which we must suppose to have been well-known to the readers of the epistle, but at whose tenor we can only just guess, standing as it does half-revealed in a dim penumbra which no inquiry will wholly lift. I should be loth to miss it, because there is about this allusion an extraordinary tenderness—at least so far as we can make out, not knowing the details of the myth—a touch of compassionate thoughtfulness exceedingly grateful and refreshing. Too often, even in the Gospels themselves, there is a certain fierce enjoyment in contrasting the saved with the lost—the lot of those cast into the outer darkness where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, in the description of unquenchable fire, and those who lay in anguish in the flames, begging in vain for a drop of cold water wherewith to cool their parched tongues; and it is unfortunately these descriptions which have taken hold upon Christendom, producing a tone of mind from which it is only just beginning to emerge and free itself. All the more remarkable and, as I said, all the more pleasant is it then to come upon this isolated evidence to a temper more gentle, less narrow, less disposed to glory in the exclusion from salvation of human souls, but anxious rather to persuade itself that the benefits of the gospel had been extended even to those who during their life-time upon earth had had no opportunity of hearing it, or who had by sinful actions rendered themselves unfit to partake in the beatitude of pure and heavenly souls. And we may be sure that the spirit of the legend, though it is devoid of historical basis, is truer to the spirit of Christ than many of the sayings relative to future punishment, which are ascribed to him by the evangelists, and hence may well rejoice that a tradition exhibiting him under so gracious and lovable an aspect should have been preserved, by chance as it were, in this spurious writing.

There is, indeed, in this account—if we can so call a mere passing reference—of Jesus, the pure and holy, fresh from the act of his supreme self-surrender, visiting the city of eternal gloom, preaching to the spirits in prison, and ministering to human souls there as he had ministered to them here, something that appeals strongly to the imaginative faculty, conjuring up the vision of a scene wherein deepest misery and divinest compassion are blended, making a whole overwhelming in its pathos and surcharged with emotion. Not long ago, indeed, one of the most gifted of our younger poets tried to transmit that vision to writing, showing, in verse of singular nobility, the effect the appearance of the Saviour produced in the realm of unhappy shades. But we need not go to any poet's fancy, however finely wrought, for an understanding of that episode: not the blind, the halt, the lame, to whom he had here restored the use of their limbs and bodily organs, would in that vast and silent region press around him, soliciting his commiseration and help; but those whose spiritual blindness had prevented them from following the beatific vision—those who were morally sick or stricken with paralysis, so that they could not walk in the ways of God and righteousness, those whose ears needed unstopping for the sweet and soothing strains of faith to reach them—to them would be the ministry of Jesus, nor would his succour and healing skill be withheld from their necessity. He dealt but in one

medicine, but that was equally potent in all the cases that came before him—the elixir of love: it radiated from his eyes, flowed from his lips, emanated from his touch; and the weary, sickly, wretched spirits brought under his influence felt their infirmities (which were their real fetters) slipping from them—some more, some less quickly, as each yielded himself more or less readily to Christ's sweet magic—felt themselves no longer in prison, no longer gyved and manacled, but free-born children of God, endowed with a glorious liberty and a no less glorious heritage, and that which had erstwhile been their prison-house was so now no longer, but a fore-court to the very presence of God, whither their deliverer pointed them to march onward, fearing nothing.

Thus the legend, if we have interpreted its meaning correctly, nor built too large a superstructure upon scanty and precarious foundations; and it seems to me that even in this busy, unromantic, prosaic world of ours, wherein legend finds little place or credence, this one has a certain significance and makes a certain appeal to us. For this world is neither pleasure-garden nor prison-house, neither heaven nor hell, but to each largely what he makes it: yea, all outward circumstances notwithstanding, each soul is its own appointed place, nor need we stray beyond the confines of the actual and close-to-hand into fabled regions of bliss or woe outside our ken, to find hell and heaven realities than which none are more real. And hence we need let our imagination wander into no under-world of unsubstantial shades to find spirits even such as are described in our text—spirits in prison, though to all appearance they walk about freely, yet chained and fettered, conscious or unconscious of their loss of liberty, their state known or unknown to those who pass them by—but prisoners for all that, bound and held fast.

There are the prisoners of passion—souls enslaved to the pursuit of this or that entrancing object of desire, ready to sacrifice their heart's innocence, their fair reputation, their purity, their peace of mind on the altar of some idol, which, in their vitiated sight, has taken the place of God Himself. Are they not verily slaves, lashed on by a cruel and deceitful master, who promises them in return for their ill-expended exertions raptures of enjoyment which mostly turn to bitterness and ashes, or, even when attained, do but the more surely corrupt and degrade the human soul? For the sake of lawless ambition, for the sake of material advantages, for the sake of base or petty revenge, for the sake of satisfying their lowest instincts, are not men seen daily led in bondage by their cravings, dragged lower and lower, losing every shred of dignity, every reminiscence of holy thoughts and aspirations? Spirits in prison—who are they if not these?—each carrying his passion like a stinging chain, incapable of self-mastery, and driven on to destruction—at best debarred from a heaven which lies all around them did they but know it.

And there are spirits dwelling in a gloomy prison of pride, untouched by a ray of sunlight, unwarmed by the flame of affection, the source of unhappiness to themselves and others. Outwardly unyielding, nay, glorying in their isolation, yet their soul is fretted by its fetters, unsatisfied, even though no word of confession is allowed to pass those lips closed in haughty silence. For the inmost man knows that it is not good for him to be alone; he knows that it is only an unhappy defect of his constitution which prevents him from seeking out his fellows and letting himself be sought out by them, giving and receiving love, mingling his joys and sorrows with theirs. But they are unable to surmount the barriers which surround them, and remain shut out from light and warmth, not knowing how to find release or to strike through the invisible walls that hold them captive.

And there are the prisoners whose bond is weakness of will—a weakness of which they are most painfully conscious, from which they suffer, which they recognise to be their shame and their bane, which they make agonised efforts to overcome, yet fail, and are left weaker by each failure. Like him whom Homer describes as rolling a block of marble up a hill with infinite toil, but who every time, just as he is nearing the top, finds the smooth load slipping from his grasp, roll to the bottom, and leaves him to renew his fruitless labour, so these, knowing their case to be what it is, realising with bitter self-reproaches the unworthiness of their position, how often have they made up their minds to wrestle with their gaoler, to vanquish the temptation which is ruining their lives, and

perhaps other ones besides, to escape from the stifling dungeon, only to find, at the decisive moment, their resolution giving way and themselves led off, in a worse than Egyptian bondage. These unhappy spirits are perhaps more than most to be pitied, who, in the classic words, "Know and approve the better, yet follow the worse"—tormented by self-contempt, martyred by remorse, but evermore kept in a shameful subjection by the infirmity they loathe, galled by chains which habit has forged, and which they are unable to shake off or break through.

And there are the prisoners of false ideals—prisoners of society, and its often heartless and meaningless code, which in order to obey they violate their best impulses, their purest feelings, fearing lest by exhibiting themselves such as they are, they may draw upon themselves social ostracism, or the dreaded shafts of ridicule; and so they lock up and let perish what is highest and most precious in them, in order to appear careful copies of the common model, exhibiting no singularity or deviation from the accepted fashion of the hour—prisoners of convention who dare not profess an unpopular conviction, an inopportune sentiment, an unorthodox faith: and though their fetters may be gilded, they are nevertheless heavy and grievous to be borne, crushing the soul, stunting its growth, and strangling its aspirations.

And lastly—for I may not prolong this list—there are those whom some great sorrow or disappointment, some bitter pain has left, as it were, maimed and paralysed, bereft of their native liberty and buoyancy, those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, unable to find a way out therefrom, their souls embittered, their limbs benumbed, their eyes clouded over and veiled by tears. There are some disillusions so keen and poignant, some losses so irreplaceable, some pangs so cruel, that they leave indelible marks upon the soul, leave it henceforth bound and powerless to escape from its unhappy thoughts and recollections. Opportunities missed, sins committed, trusts betrayed, affection slighted, dear ones who have missed their way, bosom friends become unfaithful, loved faces passed into the void—oh, the wretchedness of memory, the long hours spent in bitter or sorrowing reflection, the mind unable to free itself from these torturing images! Oh, pity them—them and their fellow-spirits in prison, but these most of all: who shall deliver them from this abode of death and despair?

Who shall deliver them? Is it too much to say—he whom the pious legend makes to preach to the suffering souls in the world beyond, who being put to death in the flesh was yet quickened in the spirit, his agency universalised, his saving power raised to infinity. Is it too much to say, nay, is it not rather the barest truth to assert, that their delivery from the various prisons they inhabit must be worked out by the incoming of the Christ-spirit, the Spirit of Love? It is this alone, a fuller measure of that supreme grace which in itself comprehends also faith and hope, which can wean the slave of passion from his soul-destroying appetite, turning his mind to higher and better things, liberating his suppressed manhood, and restoring him to the freedom of a child of the living God. It is love alone which can break down the bars of pride and melt the hard and unyielding sheath that held the soul in prison. It is love and nothing beside that can give strength to the weakling, restore his self-respect, plead with him, succour him, inspire him with a resolution to stand after the hundredth fall, to reclaim his birthright—liberty. It is Christ's spirit of love which with holy indignation strikes down the worldling's idols, shows him the shallowness of his ambitions, the worthlessness of what he has been striving after, imparts to him the courage to appear what he is, to deem nobility and truthfulness of more account than the world's smile and flattery, to be himself—God's free man, not fashion's slave.

And that divine love which assumed human form in Christ, will bring its liberating message even to those whom despair has stricken impotent and made hapless prisoners. To them it will whisper its soothing words of hope eternal, of fresh opportunities, of illimitable progress, of a meeting beyond with lost ones, of differences reconciled, of wounds made whole, of goodness unending. And as they listen to his voice, their fetters will fall to the ground, the darkness will cease to surround them, and they will recognise the world for what it is—no prison house, but God's school-ground wherein

his scholars are trained, not shackled, disciplined, nor tortured, prepared to be made partakers of Life, not death.

May we pray for the coming of this good spirit, that by its ministrations all souls may be gladdened, all prisoners set free, all walls of separation broken, all discords resolved into one great harmony—the Hymn of Love.

Lessons in Morals, with Illustrations.

SINCERITY.

I. The Three Powers.—There are three powers within us which ought only to be trained and used for right purposes; they are the powers namely of Thought or Intent, of Word, and of Deed. There are, in consequence, three corresponding virtues, or duties, which are jointly required of us by the conscience voice within ourselves and the justice-claims of others. These duties are respectively—(1) Sincerity, as affecting our thoughts; (2) Veracity, as affecting our words; (3) Honesty, as affecting our deeds. These virtues are bound together in every true character, and form thus a "triple alliance," but they are here placed in their order of importance.

II. Sincerity is of First Importance.—Sincerity is of the first importance, because it is the source from which the other duties rise. If the spring be poisoned the stream cannot be pure. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." If the intent in the heart be right, then our words will be true, and our deeds honest; but not otherwise. Outward truth of utterance or performance depend first upon "truth in the inward parts." Real veracity and genuine honesty can only arise from entire sincerity.

A Word-Picture.—The old, fanciful derivation given to the word "sincere" was *sine cera, i.e.*, without wax, like the clear strained honey; or, without cement, like the pure marble block. If the sculptor came upon a flaw, or chipped out a piece by accident, he would sometimes fill in the fault with cement, which, in time, would crumble away again. It therefore became necessary, it is said, in ordering works of art, to clearly stipulate in the contract that they should be *sine cera* (without cement).

A Contrast.—The religious sculptors, painters, and builders of the Middle Ages wrought with sincerest faithfulness even those parts of their work which were furthest removed from human sight, labouring not alone to be seen of men, but to prove sincere to their highest conception.

"In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and secret part,
For the gods are everywhere."
—*Longfellow.*

Fra Angelico frescoed the whitewashed walls of the small convent cells in St. Mark's, Florence, with as much love and sincerity as though each one had been a public gallery.

It is of Michael Angelo that Emerson says—

"The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity,
Himself from God he could not free."
—*The Problem.*

III. Sincerity means Singleness of Purpose.—This is the true etymology of the word. To be sincere is to have only one aim at a time, and that a genuine one, so that none are deceived or misled. It is to be single-minded, and not like the "double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." It is to have the single eye, of which Jesus spoke, which makes the whole body full of light. The eye is single, not when it sees only one thing, but when it looks only in one direction. To be sincere, is to be simple, and not artful; to be without guile, like the Israelite Nathanael; to be transparent throughout, like a clear crystal. "Sincerity is an entire thing in itself; hypocrisy consists of several pieces cunningly closed together" (*Fuller*).

John Woolman's Journal.—John Woolman was the first of the American Quakers to raise his voice in dead earnest against keeping slaves. Eighty-six years before Garrison began the anti-slavery campaign, and over a century before Lincoln procured emancipation, Woolman, a very humble man, started his own crusade, and gave himself to it whole-hearted and single-minded. He tramped hundreds of miles, interviewed hundreds of persons, and encountered much opposition to his cause. But throughout his life-long testimony he never lost his simple sincerity, or his sense of the oneness of humanity. He told his own story plainly and unaffectedly, and John Woolman's "Journal" should be read by all people. It is so simple and direct in style that you are listening to the real man all the while What is the secret of this sincere simplicity? This is Dr. Channing's reply: "The Secret of Woolman's purity of style is that *his eye was single.*"

IV. Sincerity is, therefore, Straightforward.—Singleness of aim produces a straightforward disposition. Sincerity goes

direct to the point, and does not beat about. Knowing its own mind, and keeping its own road, it has no side issues, like "the sinner who goes two ways." Giving credit to others for good motives, and claiming the same for itself, it trusts and is trusted, without fear or reserve. If difficulties or misunderstandings cross its course, it does not abandon its purpose, or set its sail to every wind, but steers right onward. And whether it reaches its haven, or goes down in the storm, it leaves the result to heaven.

DR. ARNOLD OF RUGBY.—When Thomas Arnold left his quiet Thames living at Laleham to become head-master of Rugby School, he knew that he was undertaking a difficult post, for he intended to introduce certain needed reforms which would bring him into conflict both with the boys and their parents. His fears were soon realised, and he was taken to task. But he wrote to one correspondent, who had ventured to remonstrate: "With regard to reforms at Rugby, *give me credit*, I must beg of you, for *a most sincere desire* to make it a place of Christian education." And the sincere desire, because of its sincerity, won its way to victory.

BISHOP FRASER, OF MANCHESTER.—When James Fraser left his peaceful rural parish at Ufton Nervet in Berkshire, to become the second Bishop of noisy, smoky Manchester, he had many misgivings as to the change, and his fitness for the new duties of his office. But his farewell words to his oldest friend were: "I hope I shall always be *straightforward*." Despite ecclesiastical difficulties, more serious than even his worst anticipations, he maintained to the end his straightforwardness, and became honoured as the "Bishop of all denominations."

V. SINCERITY MAKES NO PRETENCE.—Sincerity, therefore, stands for reality. It is what it seems; it says what it means; it means what it says. It assumes no disguise, gives itself no airs, and never dissembles for the sake of appearances. It is content to be taken at its right valuation, and wants no trappings or fine feathers to enhance its charms. It scorns all hypocrisy of every kind or degree, and would rather be found out in a fault, than act a false part in order to escape it. Sincerity fears no discovery because it has nothing to hide away.

THE ADVICE OF SOCRATES.—Socrates was once asked to name the way to honest fame. He replied promptly, "Study to be what you wish to seem."

TILLOTSON'S LAST SERMON.—John Tillotson (1630-1694), Chaplain to the King, became finally Archbishop of Canterbury, and the greatest preacher of his day. His discourses were distinguished by the earnest sincerity of his own conviction, and the clear simplicity with which they were written. Both these qualities revealed the man. The last sermon he preached before his death was, characteristically, "On Sincerity." Three short passages will illustrate its plea.

"If the shew of anything be good for anything, I am sure sincerity is better. For why does any man dissemble, or seem to be that which he is not, but because he thinks it good to have such a quality as he pretends to; for to counterfeit and dissemble is to put on the appearance of some real excellency. Now the best way in the world for a man to seem to be anything is *really to be what he would seem to be*."

"It is hard to personate and act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray herself one time or another. Therefore, if any man think it convenient to seem good, let him be so indeed, and then his goodness will appear to everybody's satisfaction."

"Sincerity is firm and substantial, and there is nothing hollow and unsound in it, and because it is plain and open, fears no discovery; of which the crafty man is always in danger, and when he thinks he walks in the dark, all his pretences are so transparent that he that runs may read them; he is the last man that finds himself to be found out, and whilst he takes it for granted that he makes fools of others, he renders himself ridiculous."

VI. SINCERITY IS FRANK AND OPEN.—The sincere man lets you get right at him, and into him, without reserve or hesitation. He has no false dignity, and no close secrecy. He has nothing to hide, or of which to be ashamed, and so he opens out his nature and is known altogether. Hence we rely, without fear, on his perfect candour, and make it a point of honour to be equally frank and fair. In the whole of human intercourse there is nothing more precious than this entire and open frankness; it is the hall-mark of sterling ingenuousness, and also the secret of good influence over others. A sincerity which is hard or cold in its demeanour loses half its value and all its power. One of the greatest needs of to-day is the frankness of sincerity.

ARNOLD TOYNBEE AND TOYNBEE HALL.—Arnold Toynbee was first a student and then a tutor at Balliol College, Oxford. Whilst in residence he gained much religious influence over the students. "Most men seem to lose their religious beliefs

in passing through the University: I made mine," he said. He read his Bible like any other book, because he liked it. After leaving Balliol, he took rooms in Whitechapel and joined Canon Barnet in East London work. From this example arose Toynbee Hall, afterwards erected and named as his memorial. To the working men in many large towns he gave popular lectures on economic subjects. By these means he wielded great influence wherever he went, but shortened his life by his too arduous work, leaving to the world as his legacy a noble ideal and an inspiring memory. What was the inner secret of Arnold Toynbee's attractive influence? "The secret of Toynbee's influence, both over his pupils and over other," says Dr. Jowett in his Memoir, "was his *transparent sincerity*. No one could find in him any trace of vanity or ambition. He was equally indifferent to the opinion of others, and probably never in his life said anything for the sake of being appreciated. *He was very frank and unreserved.* There was nothing in that beautiful soul which might not have been seen and known of all men."

VII. SINCERITY REQUIRES MENTAL HONESTY.—Sincerity makes a yet further demand: not only an open heart, but also an open mind. We must be loyally true to our own convictions, but free from prejudice towards the opinions of others. We must not fear to disagree with the majority, or with those in authority, but we must be willing to revise our own opinion in the light of fresh information. From whatever source further truth may come, we must give it a fair reception, even if it proves us to have been previously in the wrong. Sincerity means receptiveness—courageous and unself-conscious.

DR. JOHNSON.—"It was in virtue of his *sincerity* . . . that Johnson was a prophet. . . . Mark, too, how little Johnson boasts of his sincerity. He has no suspicion of his being particularly sincere, of his being particularly anything! A noble unconsciousness is in him. He does not 'engrave 'Truth' on his watch seal'; no, but he stands by truth, speaks by it, works and lives by it."—*Caryle.*

DR. CHANNING.—Writing in his Journal, when a young man, we find Channing saying: "Let me when in the society of those who differ from me, *feel the importance of sincerity.* Let me consider that virtue infinitely more important than their good opinion." Writing again, later on, he continues: "This fairness of mind is not a very showy virtue, especially when it is exercised in the common concerns of life; but perhaps it includes more magnaminity, courage, and self-denial than any other virtue. Multitudes have dared to face death in the field of battle, who have wanted strength and spirit to oppose their own and others' prejudices."

FRANK K. FREESTON.

Sunset.

The sky has a splendour
All rosy and golden,
With blue soft and tender;
The sky has a splendour
Which back the floods render
And cloud-wings enfolden.
The sky has a splendour
All rosy and golden.

The sea is swift flowing
On the rocks by the shore;
With red fire a-glowing
The sea is swift flowing,
And the white foam is showing
Where loud the waves roar.
The sea is swift flowing
On the rocks by the shore.

The billows are tossing
And joyously dancing;
With foam-wreaths embossing
The billows are tossing,
Like bright mirrors glancing.
The billows are tossing
And joyously dancing.

The cliffs cut the sky
With light on their faces;
Most radiant on high
The cliffs cut the sky.
They 'wilder the eye
As upward it traces.
The cliffs cut the sky
With light on their faces.

Gold fern and pink heather
The high headlands cover
Through warm summer weather;
Gold fern and pink heather
Inwoven together;
And seagulls fly over.
Gold fern and pink heather
The high headlands cover.

Well may our thoughts wander,
Since earth is thus fair.
What waits for us yonder?
Well may our thoughts wander,
And question and ponder
What glories are there.
Well may our thoughts wander,
Since earth is thus fair.

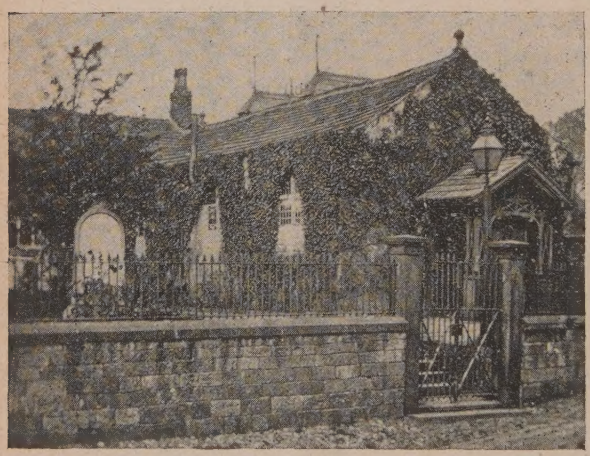
—THEODORA MILLS.

North Devon, August, 1899.

OUR ANCIENT CHAPELS.

Blackley Presbyterian Chapel, 1697.

Among the nonconforming clergy ejected by the 1662 Act of Uniformity was the Rev. Thomas Pyke, of Radcliffe Parish, near Bury. Deprived of his own parish duties, he transferred his ministrations to a little band of brave Dissenters who were holding services in Widow Travis's Cottage, at the village of Blackley, not many miles away. In course of time they became sufficiently strong to rear in Chapel Lane the humble building which appears in the illustration. The foundation



stone, or rather wooden beam, bore the date 1697. A quaint and weather worn sun-dial adorned one wall, and a century of clustering ivy came to cover with nature's picturesqueness the otherwise bare bricks. An old-fashioned iron stove warmed the interior in the winter, and, not infrequently, when out of order, filled the place with smoky incense. A tiny organ and miniature choir hid their modest pretensions behind crimson curtains upon which, in bright days, the sun silhouetted in sharp shadows the faces or forms of the singers. Round the walls a series of tablets preserved the pious memories of faithful ministers, one of whom rendered half a century's service, and another preached for 35 years. The two earliest were William Brooks, who was ordained at Macclesfield in 1700, and John Heywood, who was ordained at Warrington two years later, and died at Blackley in 1731. During the ministry of the latter, the Sacheverel Riots reached even to this village, and an excited mob, crying "The Church in danger," attacked this little Dissenting Chapel. Thomas Valentine, ordained at Knutsford, ministered next for nearly 25 years; but, passing over a brief period, John Pope surpassed his record by a decade. He was much esteemed for his knowledge, and beloved for his benevolence. For the next 50 years William Harrison took charge of the congregation, his father, Ralph Harrison, having been tutor in the Manchester Academy and minister of Cross Street Chapel.

The long ministry of William Harrison brings us down to the days of the living. He was succeeded in turn by the Rev. Abraham Lunn, the Rev. John Bishop, the Rev. James C. Street who worked up a revival, and started a Sunday School, The Rev. Adam Rushton, the Rev. Joseph Freeston, who remained 11 years and did much good in the village, the Rev. H. Basford, and the Rev. J. Maclaren Cobban, now better known as a writer of fiction. It was then decided by the congregation, to the regret of some, to pull down the old building in order to make room for a new one. The last service took place on March 24th, 1884, when the Rev. Joseph Freeston preached the final sermon to a crowded and much-moved congregation. The new building was opened for worship in December of the same year.

Biographical Addresses.

By THE LATE REV. DR. SADLER.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

III.

Of the circumstances of Henry Vaughan's life, of the persons with whom he came chiefly into contact, of the incidents of his earthly sojourn, we know very little; and yet, putting together all we know, there rises before the mind a picture, which it is pleasant and satisfying to think of. In going through the galleries of the ancient masters of painting one now and then comes to a sketch which has lost much of its outline and colouring, but which has more interest for us than many of the better preserved works around us; for all that time has left of it has a harmony and beauty, on which the eye delights to rest, and to which the imagination can add only what is congruous. So is it with that man of "high humility," of whom I am now to give a brief account, and whose self-depreciation and love of quiet and retirement have prevented us from being able to trace with distinctness his footsteps in his passage through this world.

For the date of his birth we have to look on his tombstone, which tells us that he died in 1695, aged 73; so that he was born in 1621 or 1622. We know that he had a twin brother—Thomas—and that they were born at Seethrag or Newton, in the parish of Llansantfread, in South Wales, whence Henry Vaughan was called, and called himself "Silurist." We know, too, that a remote ancestor—Sir Roger Vaughan—was killed at the Battle of Agincourt; but for particulars of the father and mother, and of the family in which the twins were brought up, we search in vain. They were fortunate in spending six years in the house of a tutor, whom they never ceased to respect and love—Matthew Herbert, a clergyman—of whom Henry says:

> "Twofold his training—love and art,—
> That of the mind, this of the heart."

And Thomas, in a dedicatory epistle to his "learned and much respected friend," writes: "Sir, I know you are not great; there's a better title, you are good. . . . There is nothing necessary in greatness, for most men do without it."

In 1638 the brothers go to Oxford, entering Jesus College; but of their career there and how long they remained we are ignorant, excepting that they were there in 1640, and that Henry tried his wings in poetry. In 1646 his first volume of poems appeared; and a year later we find both brothers again in their native place—Thomas as the parish clergyman of Llansantfread, and Henry in practice as a doctor of medicine. It was not long, however, before the former was deprived of his living on various charges, the real offence, in all probability, being his "having borne arms for the king." Retiring to Oxford, he became an experimental philosopher in those days in which Alchemy was preparing the way for Chemistry. He also had some gift for poetry, and wrote poems of considerable merit both in English and Latin. His death took place when he was still in his prime. Of Henry let us now glean what we can from his own writings, from which we learn something of his story, though for the most part vaguely, and much of his inner life. Combining the poet's calling with that of the village and country doctor, he had little prospect of outward gain; but he was content with the "threadbare, goldless genealogie of the poet." He said "the world was his palace," and he had access to "the chambers of the air," and above him were "circling all the sacred stars."

> "With angels now and spirits do I dwell;
> And here it is my nature to do well.
> And shall I then forsake the stars and signs,
> To dote upon thy dark and cursed mines?"

He had no objection to "plain living" if he might but have "high thinking." Of nature he was an ardent lover, and his native river Usk seems almost to have flowed into his very soul. Among the few things he tells us of himself, he does not forget to say—

> "Wales gave me birth, where Father Usk
> Winds now in light and now in dusk,
> O'erhung by the great mountains old,
> That fling their shadows manifold
> Far cross the valleys; and the sky
> Seems pillared by their majesty."

And he adds—

> "I catch from thee i' the hush'd woods,
> Where thou dost pour thy murm'rous floods,
> The torn Thracian's awful plaint,
> The lyre of th' old man eloquent.'

He edited a translation of an essay from the Spanish "In praise of country life," in which the dweller in the country is represented as having "wine for his servant," and the greatest advantage, not only from the various aspects of nature, but also from books, devotion, and friendship. And he himself sings—

"If Eden be on earth at all,
'Tis that which we the country call."

It has been remarked of Henry Vaughan's love of nature that its especial characteristic is the recognition of the sympathy of the outward universe with the aspirations of the spirit. With him prayer is "the world in tune with the great chime and symphony of nature."

"When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
To do the like; our bodies but forerun
The spirit's duty. True hearts spread and heave
Unto their God, as flow'rs do to the sun.
Walk with thy fellow-creatures: note the hush
And whispers amongst them. There's not a spring
Or leaf but hath his morning hymn. Each bush
And oak doth know *I am*. Canst thou not sing?"

Night is not to him a season of dread, but—

"Dear night! this world's defeat;
The stop to busy fools; care's check and curb;
The day of spirits; my soul's calm retreat,
Which none disturb!
Christ's progress and his prayer time;
The hours to which high heaven doth chime."

Another epithet of night is "the Lord's knocking time" at the door of our hearts, when we hear "His still, soft call." Vaughan is never weary of looking up at the stars; sometimes they seem to kindle a light within him; sometimes they speak to him of "God's saints, who, all night, like candles, shed their beams and light us into bed." Sometimes his thought is of a higher world, reminding us of Jean Paul's exclamation, "O eternal One, if we saw not thy starry heaven, how much would our heart, sunk into the mire of earth, know of Thee, and of immortality;" and in hours of outward and inward gloom the stars were still shining, though for a little while invisible.

Though, however, the poet-physician liked to dwell amidst quiet rural scenes, his poems bear witness to his warm appreciation of occasional visits to London, where in accordance with the custom of the times, he met choice spirits and formed lasting friendships at the Globe Tavern; and to Oxford, where in intercourse with learned men and in the Bodleian Library, he found the companions of his studies. As he turned over the pages of his favourite books, he felt as if they were written for him.

"I change the name, and thou dost write to me."

He apostrophises the founder of the famous library:

"Most noble Bodley! we are bound to thee
For no small part of our eternity.
Th'hast made us all thine heirs; whatever we
Hereafter write, 'tis thy posterity.
Thou canst not die! here thou art more than safe,
Where every book is thy large epitaph.'

Both brothers remained warmly attached to their *Alma Mater*; and Thomas has in reference to Oxford, an expression remarkable and noble. He says, "It is the *dispersed* body I have known, and that only I remember." He valued the ancient city chiefly, not on account of its spires and colleges, or the street which some have regarded as the finest in the world, or even the staff of professors at any given time, but on account of what the University had done for many centuries to form the minds and characters of men scattered far and wide. It is a curious thing that while Henry Vaughan is loud in his admiration of Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Randolph, and Cartwright, he does not mention Shakespeare.

As a firm and ardent royalist, it is impossible that Vaughan should not have been deeply affected by the troubles of his age. And as he addresses one of his poems to "his *fellow-prisoner*," we must suppose that his attachment to his king cost him some sacrifice; but he says:

"In all this deadly strife and woe,
No share had I, for well I know
In innocent blood a voice is found
Crying still from the redden'd ground.
Therefore I taught myself to weep,
As some true mother, where in sleep
Rest dead ones."

The frame of mind in which he regarded what was going on around him is shown also by his translating and publishing Plutarch's essay on "The Benefit we may get by our Enemies," in which essay we are exhorted to remember that our enemies are still our fellowmen, and that while we are opposed to them in some things, we may learn from them and follow them as examples in others.

Henry Vaughan is supposed to have been twice married; but the maiden names of his wives are not known. The grounds of the

supposition are that he had five children, and that he speaks of a book of past days, in "a white page," of which was writ the name of one, his "thought's dear Mark," "a beauty far more bright than the moon's cloudless light," in losing whom he had outlived his life and all his joys. Elsewhere he speaks of "a fair, *young* light, his guide, to holy grief," whose worth he understood only when removed from his side.

Only second in tenderness is his lament over the death of a younger brother. Thinking of those who had fled to their Maker's throne, he says:

"O could I track them! but souls must
Track one the other;
And now the spirit, not the dust,
Must be thy brother."

(To be concluded in our next.)

Why Study the Bible?

By the Rev. J. D. SUNDERLAND, M.A.

PART I.

A Bible is found in nearly every English-speaking home. Most of us would probably feel ashamed to live in a home that did not contain a Bible. Indeed in most houses a Bible of large size, with rich binding and elaborate illustrations, lies conspicuous in the parlour, as if to say to everyone coming in, "See how I am prized here."

So, too, a Bible lies on every Christian pulpit, as the great book from which every preacher is expected to read religious lessons regularly to his people, and to choose texts on which to base his discourses. Not less in the Sunday school and the work of religious education is it the book everywhere made central and conspicuous.

Under such circumstances it would naturally be supposed that practically everybody must be well acquainted with the Bible,—that whatever else anyone allows himself to be ignorant of, here at least he will be found intelligent.

Is this supposition true? Go about the land, among all classes of the people, and will you find a knowledge of the book corresponding to the outward deference paid it?

I very much fear not. I fear that much of the Bible display which we see is really a cover for Bible ignorance, and that many even of those who give the sacred volume the most conspicuous place in their homes, and would be most shocked by seeing a minister read from any other book in his pulpit, have little knowledge of what the Bible really is, where it came from, or what it actually contains. It is a great deal easier to make a fetich of a book than it is to become intelligent about it.

Few things have ever surprised me more than the revelations that have come to me again and again, in all sorts of ways, of the ignorance of the Bible that exists in the minds of men and women all about us.

Regarding this central book, not only of our religion, but of our whole Christian civilization, multitudes of persons—not only the poor and the comparatively illiterate, but the well to do, the cultured, graduates of colleges, persons who in other directions have read widely—manifest a want of knowledge that is extreme, that subjects them frequently to embarrassment, that puts them at a serious disadvantage in reading and in conversation, and that is wholly without excuse among men or women claiming even moderate intelligence.

Some one inquired of a coloured man who was just beginning to read, what progress he was making? "Oh," he exclaimed, "I am out of the Bible and into the newspaper." I am afraid that a majority of Americans get out of the Bible and into the newspapers sadly early.

Last year the president of an American college gave an account in the New York *Independent* of an experiment which he had just been making in his freshman class, with a view to testing the knowledge of the Bible possessed by young men entering college. There were thirty-four members in the class. He wrote out on the blackboard twenty-two extracts from Tennyson. Each one of these extracts contained an allusion to some scripture event, or scripture scene, or scripture passage, supposably familiar to everybody. The young men averaged about twenty years of age. They were the sons of lawyers, teachers, doctors, preachers, merchants, farmers. They had grown up in well-to-do homes, and more than half of them were church members. What was the result of the experiment?

Nine of the thirty-four failed to understand

the quotation, "My sin was a thorn among the thorns that girt thy brow." Eleven did not know what was referred to by "the manna in the wilderness." Sixteen knew nothing about the "wrestling of Jacob with the angel." Twenty-six were ignorant of "Joshua's moon," and twenty-eight of "Jonah's gourd." Twenty-two were unable to explain the allusion to Baal. One thought that Baal was a priest who put Christians to death. Nineteen had apparently never read the idyll of Ruth and Boaz. Eighteen did not know the meaning of "Egyptian darkness." Twenty-four were unable to write anything about "Jacob's ladder." Sixteen could not explain what was meant by "the deathless angel seated in the vacant tomb." Thirty-two out of the thirty-four young men had never heard of the shadow turning back on the dial for Hezekiah's lengthening life. One of them trying to explain the matter thought that Hezekiah stopped the sun. One young man explained the mark set on Cain by saying that he was a farmer, and had to work hard. And so it went on to the end.

Perhaps there may be a grain of comfort to some of us who are Unitarians in the knowledge that only one of these students claimed to be of our faith. Nearly all came from orthodox homes and congregations. But I cannot refrain from wondering how much better would have been the showing if all had been liberals in religion.

Nor is this ignorance of the Bible confined to young men. I have just been reading the experience of a teacher of young ladies. Condensing her statement, it is as follows:—History is a department constantly needing side lights thrown upon it from the Bible. When Babylon is to be studied, I always take a Bible into my class-room and give a reading about Daniel. But what I read about him, or about Belshazzar or Nebuchadnezzar, is generally news to my pupils.

In connection with science I sometimes speak about the attempted reconciliation of the biblical and the evolutionary theories of creation. But what is all I can say but words, mere words, to young ladies unacquainted with the story of creation in Genesis?

In geography I chance to say of certain places that they are as far apart as Dan from Beersheba. But what does that mean to pupils who do not know Palestine?

Literature, of all branches, to be quickly appreciated, demands familiarity with the Bible. One day I said to my class, concerning some doubtful plays of Shakespeare, that they were apocryphal, like certain scripture books. But I found that only a small part of the class had ever heard of the Apocrypha.

It is a pleasure for me to hold up Macaulay as a master of style. All goes well until I begin to call attention to his frequent and masterly use of scripture quotations and scripture allusions, and then a blank and helpless look begins to creep over the faces of more of my students than I like to confess.

I note in the popular magazines some Bible allusions, such as "driving like Jehu," "smiting as Samson did the Philistines," "Jephtha's vow," a "Jeremaid," the "friendship of David and Jonathan," and "Mordecai at the gate." One would suppose that these allusions would be familiar to every intelligent girl of fourteen. But I have taught girls of supposed intelligence, much older than fourteen, to whom nearly every one of these Scripture references would be like speech in an unknown tongue.

Do we think that the experience of this teacher of young ladies is unusual? I very much fear it is not; as I very much fear that the experience of that college president with his young men could be paralleled in a great many places in this country, inside of institutions of learning and outside.

I call attention to this widespread ignorance of the Bible, because it is a very serious matter. Especially is it serious to those who profess to be intelligent, and to young men and young women who are educating themselves for lives of influence and leadership in society.

What are the causes of this ignorance? Probably it would be safe to say that the principal causes are three.

1. One is thoughtlessness. It is not uncommon for persons to give years to the study of other things, without having it once occur to them that the Bible is something which they need to study as they do other books.

2. Another cause operating with a class, and a larger class than we sometimes think, is repugnance to the Bible. Persons often get this

repugnance by having the Bible thrust upon them as an arbiter of thought; by being required to believe everything in it as the inspired word of God; or by being given to understand that they are doing wrong when they undertake honestly to investigate what seem to them unscientific statements, contradictions, or immoral teachings found within its pages. Once thus prejudiced against the Bible, by arbitrary and irrational claims made in its behalf, it is by no means unusual for persons to push it aside out of their thought, and pay no more attention to it as long as they live.

3. A third cause of ignorance of the Bible is unintelligent study of it, that is, study by methods that are false and misleading. One of our American humorists has said, "It is better not to know so much, than to know so many things that are not so." This applies to much so-called knowledge of the Bible. The more one has of such knowledge the more ignorant he is—and hopelessly ignorant, because his eyes are sealed against the truth. He who studies the Bible only by bits and fragments and isolated texts, and thus destroys perspectives, ignores environments, and breaks up unities; he who studies the Bible to find texts to prove or disprove whatever he wants to prove or disprove; he who studies the Bible to read into it what is in his own mind, and out of it what he does not welcome; he who studies the Bible under the bias of an infallibility theory which compels him to see every irrational thing as rational, and every morally imperfect thing as morally perfect; he who studies the Bible under the infatuation that it is different from all other books, and is therefore to be interpreted according to principles different from those which we apply to the interpretation of other books—is simply blinding his own eyes, and under the name of knowledge accumulating prejudice and ignorance.

What is the remedy for ignorance of the Bible? Of course the only possible remedy is intelligent Bible study. But it *must* be *intelligent, rational* and *according to principles that are true.*

There is an impression in many minds that Bible study is fitting enough for children, and perhaps for women, but not for men. Men have other and more important matters on hand. I grant that men do have, or at least ought to have, more important business on hand, than much that calls itself Bible study in this age.

But, for that matter, so ought women, and so ought children. There is a great deal of study of the Bible carried on by methods so unintelligent, so utterly outgrown and unreasonable, that if they were applied to anything else they would be a subject for laughter, if not for pity. And yet these methods are clung to, and practiced, and even defended all around us. A typical interpreter of the Bible according to these methods is Dr. Talmage, who, the last time he was in Ann Arbor, declared on the platform of the great hall of the University that the story of Jonah and the Whale is to be accepted as historic fact, because it is in the Bible. Perhaps the most conspicuous defender of these methods in this country is Mr. Moody, who within three months has told us, in the strongest terms he could command, that everything in the Bible, from cover to cover, including the stories of Eve made out of the rib of Adam, the talking serpent, Noah and the ark, and the falling down of the walls of Jericho at the blowing of the ram's horns, is to be accepted as the infallible and perfect word of God, and that the Bible and Christianity stand or fall with the historic character of these stories. How are such amazing utterances received by the ministers and churches of America? With protests and shame? On the contrary, his Bible schools are extolled from one end of the land to the other. Everywhere young men, including college students, are urged to attend them. He is put forward as the great champion of the Bible in our time. He tells us that never before in his history did he have the Evangelical churches of this country so solidly and unitedly at his back as now. Within a month the Chicago papers have been giving us the information that he is proposing to organise that city, with a thoroughness and completeness never known before, for a whole season's campaign of Bible study, as archaic in character as oblivious of, and contrary to, the best Bible scholarship of our day, and based on principles as completely passed by in the march of intelligence, as would be

the study of alchemy for chemistry, or medieval astrology in the place of modern astronomy.

Is it any wonder that men with brains, men living in a world into which modern knowledge has come, feel that they have more important work on hand than studying the Bible under such guidance and according to such methods? Men do have more important business on hand to-day than studying astrology and alchemy; but are not astronomy and chemistry solid enough and important enough to command men's attention? So with the Bible. Does anyone who has opened his eyes to the mighty floods of light which science, and historic investigation, and biblical criticism have thrown upon the Bible, doubt that that great book, studied rationally and in the light of modern knowledge, is worth the attention of the sanest and the strongest minds?

End of Part I.

"Peaky Blinders." *

An admitted factor in our social life, however tardy or unwilling its recognition.

That type of humanity so recently pourtrayed by one of our Great Unpaid in all its war-paint, from the greasy curl patted down on forehead to the buttons and the bell-bottomed belongings, which, by its very persistent presence in our midst, can no longer be wisely ignored by any would-be social reformer.

Habitually moving about in gangs from a score or more in number, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty years, and varying from well dressed respectability, in velvet jacket, brightly coloured scarf, huge metal ring, and the crowning cigarette, to the less favoured corduroys—a ragged, unkempt, untidy and uncouth array of togs, pinned or even nailed together—*en masse* they make a somewhat imposing army, a terror to the small shopkeeper, an ever irritating bait on the policeman's otherwise monotonous beat, a continual menace to his peace and pleasure, not to mention safety, or even life.

Born of careless or indifferent parents, early realising the streets to be his only playground, finding his chums amongst similarly ill-favoured lads, feeling no one cares for him, and that he in turn need care for none, the Peaky full soon learns to know, and to measure, the full force of his enemies, who comprise such, to his mind, useless beings as school attendance officers, employers of labour, landlords of house property, "coppers" and "beaks."

His daily life is one continual scuffle after meals, sport, or mischief; meals, because of his growing appetite, at the expense of whoever will—and what they lack in quality, quantity can make good; sport from street football to pitch and toss in the seclusion of the court or alley; and mischief in all its forms and in every degree, only checked by remote fears of the law, which he all too early becomes expert in evading.

To see him at his best, watch the gang "do a rush" at the Fair, a raid at a football match, or on Bank Holidays in the public parks; but his pranks are too frequently visible right in our very midst, and an even faint outline of them would unnecessarily lengthen this article.

That Peaky Blinders are a social plague-spot none will deny; nor are they confined to one sex, for as "Molls" their sisters too often go on the equally forbidding rampage, and are too often but "aiders and abettors" of their male companions of the street.

And admitting so much why not leave the matter there, and behind our *laissez-faire* console ourselves that we have police, prisons, and Parliament?

In our suburban retreats, less disturbed by Peaky pranks, though now and again hedges, fences, and flower beds testify to a visit, we are too apt to think it is no concern of ours, or to assert that, as regards Peaky Blinders at any rate, "I am not my brother's keeper."

And so their class grows, the gulf between them and true citizenship rapidly widens, and our city life is marred by this ever eloquent blot upon its progress.

Can anything be done? Need this cesspool of iniquity be stirred up prior to its final filling up, or shall we still go on keeping them under by the irregular, uncertain, and, too often, unavailing terrors of the law?

Whose business is it to interfere? What social agencies or religious centres of activity touch this particular class?

* "Peaky Blinders" is the slang name given in the Black Country to the young untamed roughs who are the despair of our civilisation.

The Church, the Chapel, the Sunday School, as popularly understood, are all too eminently respectable for this work; the Salvation Army, who, to their lasting credit be it said, have tried to tackle the problem of the "submerged tenth," find no more relentless foe to the harmony of their meetings than the Peaky; the otherwise commendable Adult Sunday School movement misses this class also, and also for the same reason as the Church and Chapel, and we confess with regret we know of no existing agency ready to go in and win over the Peakies to decent manhood and law-abiding citizenship.

True, we recall *one* city church in the slums whose mission amongst the Peakies is a success, even though obtained through the medium of the gymnasium and the boxing-gloves; we know, too, that the recent opening up of free week evening classes by the Birmingham and Aston School Boards has reached a respectable fringe of the class in question, and at least promoted them on three nights a week, and for four or five months of the year, to a vastly superior companionship to that of the streets; but even here misgivings come in; for after all the heart is not touched, and for the sake of light and warmth and shelter even Peakies will go to school—and learn, too, if it so suits them. But is it not the duty of the Church, whether "as by law established," or Nonconformist, or whatever phase of religious activity it represents, to undertake the reformation of the Peaky while there is yet time?

We would advocate an organised system of club-rooms in connection with every existing church, chapel, and mission hall in the city which has got the rooms at disposal—though now, alas, too often under lock and key.

We would suggest that on every week night a well warmed, brightly lighted, neatly furnished room should be open free, from 6 to 11 p.m., liberally supplied with newspapers, periodicals, books, bagatelle-tables, draught-boards, dominoes, etc., also a piano, or music in any form, and lastly, wherever possible, facilities for gymnastics, for refreshments, and for the necessary "wash and brush up." In every such centre let there be a Committee of Control to promote orderliness, respect, and a sense of comradeship, with a band of young fellows and young women prepared to be brothers and sisters to these unlovely yet lovable wrecks on life's earliest shores; and let all be directed by experienced leaders who can command discipline, and who can organise with sanctified common sense.

We urge a gigantic City Recreation Guild, unsectarian, yet distinctly religious; and beg for it the active co-operation of *every* religious, philanthropic, and social agency; with the one aim of winning over by sheer "brotherliness" the entire community of Peakies to a new "brotherhood" of service, citizenship, and comradeship with members vieing with each other in all the arts and crafts of industry and enterprise, and in all that makes for civic righteousness. In His name let something be done, who did not hesitate to sup with the "publicans and sinners," who taught, proved, and practised the brotherhood of all mankind, and who proclaimed that before His Father not even a sparrow falls unnoticed. How much the less likely then, even a Peaky!

J. R. C.

Speaking of her death, Lady Augusta, the wife of Dean Stanley, said: "When I am gone think of me as in the next room."

We touch men by words. These are the thistledown which float on the air like lifeless things, but where one bit alights a new life grows up. How much of ourselves goes out in our words!

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THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Sweeping the Skies.

Blue are the beautiful skies!
Bright each particular star!
Children, who see with such innocent eyes,
Ask what the pretty things are.

One little darling is told,
If she can give them a tap,
Plates of sky-china, emboss'd with star-gold,
Softly will slide to her lap.

All in a flutter at this,
Eager such treasure to win,
Light little laughters, inviting a kiss,
Dimple her delicate chin.

Darling has gathered a rose
(Scarce can her hand get so high),
Stands on the tip of her little fat toes,
Thinks she can reach the sky.

Seizes on grandpapa's stick
(Oft she bestrode it in play),
Jumps on a garden chair, holds it up quick,
Lest they should snatch her away.

Darling is dumb with despair:
What can a little child do?
With the bad stick she can beat the bad chair,
Break the bad rose-bud in two.

Up to the attic she crept,
Mounted the laddery stair,
Out on the roof in a rapture she stept,
Brandish'd a broom in the air.

* * * *

Searching through house and through wood,
Calling and calling again,
"Darling! O naughty! O darling! be good!"—
Searching and calling in vain.

One from the others aloof,
Standing, bewildered in gloom,
Sees little darling step out on the roof
Sweeping the skies with Ann's broom.

Dares not to speak or to move,
Fears lest a breath should betray;
Wonderful silence of wonderful love,
Keeping his anguish at bay.

Sweet little figure in white
Perch'd on the roof all alone,
Sweeping the skies with a scream of delight;
Begging a star for her own.

Softly he enters the house,
Softly ascendeth the stair,
Steals up the ladder as still as a mouse:
Oh! is it hope or despair?

Through the trap window he peeps,
Peeps at the dear little maid;
Through the trap-window a sturdy arm creeps,
Creeps like a creature afraid.

On, under steady command,
On, creeps that desperate arm,
Clutches a fat little leg in its hand,
Snatches its darling from harm.

What though a dusty old broom
Brushes his face and his eyes?
What though his darling in resolute gloom,
Sweeps *him* instead of the skies?

Gratitude,—rapture,—delight,—
Prayer from a satisfied heart;
Tears he would hide from her wondering sight,
But which she sees as they start.

Out come her lips for a kiss,
Thinking he cries from the pain;
Sweet eager promises bind her to this—
Never to sweep *him* again.

Kissing his face in distress,
Feeling she merits reproof;
Utterly hopeless to make her confess
Girls should not climb on the roof.

What can they do in this strait?
How keep her down from the skies?
Lock the trap-door and patiently wait
Till the wee darling grows wise.

Who Knows?

A butterfly was flitting
About in careless bliss:
He gayly thought, without a word,
"I'm not a chrysalis!"

A little frog was perching
Upon a great big log:
He croaked, while proudly sitting there,
"I'm not a pollywog!"

A peacock strutted vainly,
Dressed gaily as a belle:
"I'm glad," he cried, with haughty looks,
"I'm not within a shell!"

Then an enormous bull-dog
Went stalking round the place,
And growled, "I'm not a puppy small,
'Twould be a sore disgrace!"

Though very wise the grown folk,
Though very tall and trim,
Keep up good heart, my little folk,
Who knows what they have been?

—*Jessie Mills, in the Advance.*